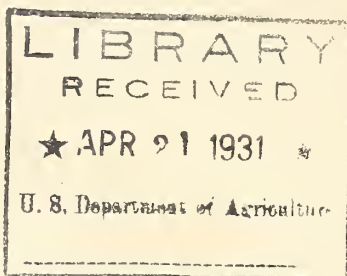


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### WEATHER AND FARM OPERATIONS

A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Senior Meteorologist, Weather Bureau, delivered through WRC and 40 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, April 8, 1931.

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In reviewing the weather of March this year, we find quite a contrast from that experienced in February, especially as regards temperature. March, normally, is 14° or 15° warmer than February along the central-northern border of the country, and 6° to 8° warmer in the East and South. This year the usual order of things was reversed in most of the South, the great central valleys, and the Northwest, March being colder than February. You probably recall that February was abnormally warm in practically all parts of the country. Another unusual feature of March weather was the severe cold wave that overspread the Northwest and Middle West toward the close of the month. Up to that time it had been persistently cool in the South, and warm for the season in the North, but the last week brought a rapid and abrupt change to extreme wintry conditions in the Northwest and West, with a severe blizzard in some places, and heavy snow as far south as northwestern Texas. The coldest weather of the year was experienced in some mid-Western States. This cold wave did considerable damage to early fruit bloom, gardens, and tender truck in the Southwest, but, fortunately, it did not extend to the extreme South, or to the States east of the Mississippi River.

As regards moisture, March was decidedly more favorable than the preceding winter months, especially in the States east of the Mississippi River. While rainfall continued below normal in most sections east of the Great Plains, it was rather frequent and more substantial than for any month since last fall. The greatest shortages for March were in the area extending from the Ohio Valley southward nearly to the Gulf where only one-half to three-fourths of the normal occurred. The lower Colorado Valley and southern California were notably dry, but the Pacific Northwest, the Great Plains, the extreme Southeastern States, and the northeastern parts of the country had much more than normal.

The first week in April brought additional substantial and widespread precipitation to nearly all States east of the Mississippi River. These further improved soil conditions, and the ground is now moist down to a considerable depth. In many places even wells and springs are coming back, with small streams running full, and, in some sections, rivers are reported about bankfull for the first time in a year. Between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains beneficial precipitation occurred in the north, and in central and southern districts the soil is amply moist from preceding rains. The drought is now either definitely broken, or largely relieved, in nearly all parts of the country, with ample soil moisture for present needs nearly everywhere. The deep subsoil is still dry in large areas, however, which requires later substantial rains, but the outlook at this time is favorable and very encouraging, for, with normal rainfall and seasonable temperatures, crops will get a good start, and should do well.

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The progress of vegetation has recently been retarded considerably throughout the central and southern portions of the country, because of the persistent coolness. In these areas temperatures have been below normal almost continuously for the past month; which has slowed up farm work and germination of early planted seeds of all kinds. The hardier truck crops are doing well, and pastures are showing steady improvement, with some grazing afforded as far north as Kentucky, and well to the Northern portions of the Great Plains. There has been no material harm from frost, except for severe damage to early fruit, gardens, and tender truck in the Southwest by last week's freeze. Grain crops apparently were not permanently injured, though growth is slow because of setback. In other sections winter wheat continues satisfactory advance, but unfavorable reports of earlier weather damage come from middle Atlantic sections. Wheat has come through well, with very little winter killing.

Farm work has been rather inactive lately, because of frequent rains in the Eastern States, and the cool, wet condition of the soil over a large area of the Southwest. Very little corn was planted during the past week, though some early fields were put in as far north as South Carolina and Tennessee. Germination of the early-planted is slow and uncertain, because of the coolness. In an average year, corn planting begins by April 10 as far north as southern Virginia, Southern Kentucky, south-central Missouri, and east-central Kansas. Thus planting, so far this year, is a little behind the average. Cotton planting was also inactive, with only a small amount accomplished in the more southern portions of the belt, but a little has been seeded as far north as Arkansas. Progress last week of the early-planted cotton in the extreme southern portions of the belt was poor, but the condition of that in southern Texas is fair. Cotton planting usually begins by April 10 north to extreme southern North Carolina, northern Mississippi, southern Arkansas, and extreme southeastern Oklahoma. This work is also somewhat behind a normal year in most sections. However, to-day, blue skies and springtime warmth are smiling on our farms throughout nearly the entire country, with bright sunshine and temperatures as high as 50° as far north as St. Paul, Minnesota, as early as 7 o'clock this morning. In other words, so far as weather is concerned, it appears our farmers are finally getting "a break".

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